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SUBJECT: GERMAN MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR HABER REVIEWS TOP PRIORITIES WITH AMBASSADOR

REF: BERLIN 11

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES GREG DELAWIE FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) In a January 20 introductory call with the Ambassador, MFA Political Director Emily Haber (see REFTEL) discussed Iran sanctions strategy, FM Westerwelle's tough message in Yemen, the politics of Afghanistan, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. She praised U/S Burns' leadership in the E3 3 meeting in New York. Also present were North America Division Director Beate Maeder-Metcalf and DCM.

¶2. (C) Haber said her top priority was Iran. Regarding the January 16 E3 3 meeting in New York, she praised U/S Burns' leadership, especially his ability to manage the Chinese representative. She said Germany aims to first forge a "carefully calibrated solution" in the UNSC before the European Union begins its own decision-making process. She suggested that Germany and France did not necessarily see eye-to-eye on the timing of EU sanctions as the French were more inclined to push for EU sanctions immediately.

(Comment: MFA Iran experts have stressed to Poloff that their rationale for waiting to start EU discussions once UNSCR talks have begun is strategic. They argue that starting EU talks before the UNSC begins its consideration will lead to a failure to reach consensus within the EU. The Germans believe that such a failure would be more destructive to the overall goal of showing unity to the Iranians than it would be to wait for the UNSC talks to begin. End comment.)

¶3. (C) On Afghanistan, Haber said it was important to engage the Social Democrats (SPD) and get them on board with a new mandate. She noted Chancellor Merkel was reaching out to the SPD to gain their support, even as the German government faces problems convincing a skeptical German public about the need for an enhanced German presence in RC-North. She thanked the United States for its patience in giving Germany time to reflect on its options before and after the January 28 London Conference.

¶4. (C) Haber joined Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle during his recent visit to Yemen. She described the country as "medieval." During their meeting with President Saleh, Saleh frequently left the room to take phone calls, which supposedly focused on the state and whereabouts of five German hostages. Westerwelle repeatedly asked Saleh about Yemen's national dialogue only to hear: "what national dialogue are you talking about?" In a separate meeting with Poloff, MFA State Minister Werner Hoyer's Chief of Staff noted that Westerwelle had strong words with President Saleh about solving internal problems with military force.

Westerwelle left the meeting questioning whether it made sense to continue to throw money at the Yemenis in the absence of concrete results on CT cooperation and help with kidnappings.

¶ 5. (C) As former Special Envoy for Southeastern Europe and Turkey, Haber remains worried about political developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which continue to undermine the authority of the High Representative. She said it was time to exert more pressure on all parties concerned and think about restructuring the international community's presence there.

DELAWIE